



REVEREND ISAAC MCCOY  
FIRST CLERGYMAN AT FORT LEAVENWORTH  
FROM AN OIL PAINTING MADE IN 1831 AT THE AGE OF 47 YEARS

# Fort Leavenworth Its Churches and Schools



By  
Henry Shindler



The Army Service Schools Press

1912



To The  
Army of Christian Women  
Who Have Lived at Fort Leavenworth  
Whose Devotion to the Church  
Inspired the Work of Its Ministers  
This History is Most Respectfully  
Dedicated



## Preface

---

**D**URING his tour of duty at Fort Leavenworth, between 1905 and 1908, Chaplain John T. Axton, 18th Infantry, requested the undersigned to furnish him some data concerning the post chapel's history.

The result of an examination of the post records, together with personal recollections covering a period of thirty-five years, produced a more bountiful harvest than anticipated. This was presented in a hurriedly compiled pamphlet under the title of "Public Worship at Fort Leavenworth". While it met with a most kindly reception, it proved so unsatisfactory to the undersigned, that he determined upon this revision. Data, not heretofore available, has been used for this revision.

It also includes a history of kindred church organizations of the post, of the past and present school system, and of its cemeteries.

If this compilation meets with the reception accorded other publications relating to Fort Leavenworth, by the undersigned, he will feel amply rewarded for the time and labor expended.

HENRY SHINDLER

FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS,  
MAY 10, 1912



## CONTENTS

	PAGES
Altar Society (Roman Catholic) .....	119-121
Altar Guild (Protestant) .....	111-118
Army Young Men's Christian Association ..	135-139
Attendance at Divine Service Suggested in Army Regulations .....	33-34
Authorizing Chaplains for Army, Legislation	21-32
Building of First Catholic Chapel at Post ...	91-93
Catholic Congregation .....	85
Cemeteries at Post .....	165-169
Chaplain Stone's Journal (1859-1868).....	49-66
Distinguished Dead in Cemetery .....	171-176
Divine Worship, History of .....	3-18
Divine Service at U.S. Military Prison.....	77-83
Erection of Present Catholic Chapel .....	99-107
List of Catholic Clergymen who have served local mission as resident pastors .....	87-90
List of Army Chaplains who have served at Fort Leavenworth .....	37-45
Post Chapels, Erection of .....	69-73
School Facilities, (Public and Private, Past and Present) .....	143-153
School, Parochial .....	155-161
Vital Statistics, Post's .....	125-131





## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

---

Rev. Isaac McCoy .....	Frontispiece
Pawnee Indian Mission in 1827 .....	8
Rev. Hiram Stone .....	39
Rev. George Robinson .....	39
Rev. J. T. Axton .....	39
Rev. John Woart .....	39
First Post Chapel .....	70
Present Post Chapel .....	70
Rev. J. B. McCleery .....	77
Rev. C. C. Pierce .....	77
Rev. Thomas H. Barry .....	77
Rev. P. H. Silver .....	77
St. Ignatius Chapel .....	85
Rt. Rev. J. B. Miede .....	90
Rev. Ambrose Butler .....	90
Rev. James O'Reilly .....	90
Rev. Thomas Downey .....	90
Rev. John Hurley .....	90
First Catholic Church .....	92
Rt. Rev. L. M. Fink .....	99
Gen. M. R. Morgan .....	99
Rev. Thomas H. Kinsella .....	99
Rev. M. J. Dougherty .....	99
Altar Present Post Chapel .....	112
Interior St. Ignatius Chapel .....	119
Home of Army Y. M. C. A. ....	135
Portrait of Miss Helen M. Gould .....	135
Lobby Scene in Y. M. C. A. Building .....	136
Gymnasium in Y. M. C. A. Building .....	136
Bible Class, Army Y. M. C. A. ....	138
Library of Army Y. M. C. A. ....	138



## Introduction

---

**I**N PRESENTING this little volume it is proper to state to those who may not be familiar with the history of the post that the current of events which have fashioned the United States into the shape in which it exists today have swept through the lands of the Fort Leavenworth Military Reservation for nearly a century of its life.

The post of Fort Leavenworth came into existence in 1827 as a result of efforts on the part of Missouri's foremost constructive statesman—United States Senator Thomas H. Benton. The people of Mexico had only a few years previously declared their independence of Spanish rule and decided upon an open door policy—the establishment of commerce between their country and the United States. Senator Benton early foresaw the possibilities of this commerce for the people living on the western border of his state and, in fact, for the entire Nation. Early in its existence hostile Indians threatened this trade, attacking caravans engaged in its carriage across the wide expanse of prairie. The Senator demanded protection for this trade, taking the position that the commerce of the prairie was entitled to protection equally to that of the seas for which navies were maintained. Congress gave its assent in appropriating funds for the survey of a trade route and military protection. It is this route which later became known as the Santa Fè trail. To meet the military requirements for its protection it was decided to establish a post at some point on the Mis-

souri river convenient to the initial point of the "trail". Colonel Henry Leavenworth, Third U. S. Infantry, stationed at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, was assigned to the duty of selecting a suitable site. Under orders of March 7, 1827, he proceeded up the Missouri river and chose the spot now bearing his name.

The post's relation to this newly created commerce; to the political conditions following the organization of the Territory of Kansas; its selection as the capital of the new Territory and its position during the Civil War, as well as in the settlement of the vast empire over which military authority controlled, emanating from here, and now the seat of learning in the higher branches of the Art of War, has given it a commanding position as a military station second to none in the country.

---

In 1829 the first military escort left Fort Leavenworth to accompany a caravan of traders from Independence, Missouri, to the Mexican frontier.

In 1835 the First Dragoons under Colonel Henry Dodge left Fort Leavenworth to explore the country between the Missouri river and the Rocky Mountains and to secure the friendship of the Pawnee Indians. The command marched northward to the mouth of the Platte river; thence westward to the base of the Rocky Mountains, and thence south to the Arkansas river, taking the Santa Fé trail homeward.

Close by the post ran the Oregon trail which, like its co-partner to the southwest, had an important effect on the development of the territory embraced between the Missouri river and Pacific coast. The trail had a direct and powerful influence in winning the Oregon country for the United States the settlement of which was reached with Great Britain in 1846.

It was here, in 1846, the "Army of the West" for operation against Mexico was organized under General S. W. Kearney and to which the now famous First Missouri Mounted Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan belonged. When the army reached Santa Fé General Kearny marched, to California, while the Missourians proceeded to the active theatre of war. For the United States it achieved victories not only of great importance upon the final results of the war but without a parallel in ancient or modern military history.

The exodus of Mormons to Utah in 1847, gave Fort Leavenworth a prominence and importance its founder, who was dead at this time, never imagined would come to it.

The gold excitement of 1849 in California carried thousands through its gates on their long and wearisome march. This was followed later by the throngs who moved on "Pike's Peak or Bust".

In 1851 General E. V. Sumner left this post at the head of an important expedition to punish the Cheyennes and other hostile tribes, which had been committing serious depredations.

In 1854 the Territory of Kansas was organized. Fort Leavenworth was made its temporary capital, and with it came the titanic struggle between the elements which stood for slave and that which stood for freedom.

In 1857 an expedition was organized for the purpose of proceeding to Utah to punish the Mormons who declined to obey the laws of the country. It was commanded by Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston.

In January, 1858, eight companies of the Sixth Infantry, were assembled here for its grand march to the Pacific coast. The regiment left in March and arrived on the shores of the Pacific, within

twenty miles of San Francisco, in November of the same year.

During the civil war the reservation was made the concentration point for numberless regiments of western volunteers who were here mustered-in and out of the service.

After the war it was made the headquarters of the country's largest geographical-military department embracing all the territory between the Missouri river and the Rio Grande. Authority over this territory was exercised by some of the Nation's most distinguished soldiers, products of the Civil War.

Following the Civil War it was the central supply depot for troops operating on the plains against hostile Indians.

In 1881 the Infantry and Cavalry School was established. What it has done and is still doing to further knowledge in the art of war is familiar to all and needs no recounting here.

Fort Leavenworth is the Army's Mecca. Many Army men and women claim it as their birth place and to these it is bound by ties time only can tear asunder. To many it has furnished a place of rest from which they cannot be disturbed until "first call" shall be sounded by one whose trumpet will be heard around the world.





I've wandered wide, and wandered far  
But never have I met,  
In all this lovely western land  
A spot more lovely yet.

—BRYANT

---

---

## Division One

---

### History of Divine Worship at Fort Leavenworth

---

---

